INDIAN MINERAL INDUSTRIES LIMITED

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CALCUTTA 2

a quarterly on Jainology

Jain Journal

जैन भवन

JAIN BHAWAN

CALCUTTA

VOL. V JANUARY 1971 NO. 3

Rupee One

All contributions, which must be type-written, and correspondence regarding contributions and book-reviews should be addressed to the Editor, Jain Journal, P-25 Kalakar Street, Calcutta-7.

For advertisement and subscription please write to the Secretary, Jain Bhawan, P-25 Kalakar Street, Calcutta-7. Subscription for one year : Rs. 3.00. Foreign : Rs. 7.00. Single copy : Re. 1.00.

Published by Moti Chand Bhura on behalf of Jain Bhawan from P-25 Kalakar Street and printed by him at The Technical & General Press, 17 Crooked Lane, Calcutta-1.

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Sri Sahajanandoghanaji Maharaj

—Indra Dugar

Courtesy : Bijoy Singh Bader

Jaina Yogi
Sri Sahajanandaghanaji Maharaj

Jaina Yogi Sri Sahajanandaghanaji Maharaj passed away on November 2, 1970. The divine voice which he is said to have heard at the age of 19 urging him to go to a sacred hill and stand there in *kāyotsarga* like a tree led him in the future to give up the life of a Jaina Muni and to wander in hills and forests infested with wild animals. He evolved his own code of conduct which did not always conformed to the orthodox Jaina prescriptions, but his integrity and faith were never in doubt. The austere life that he led after renunciation placed him more in line with the past *Jinas* than in that of ordinary monks. He travelled widely from the Himalayas to the deep South, from Gujarat to Bengal. Finally, he settled at Hampi in Mysore which he considered to be the ancient city of Kiskindhya, a place of Jaina pilgrimage. We pay our sincere homage to the departed soul.

AHIMSA IN JAINISM

—viewed in historical perspective—

AMULYACHANDRA SEN

1

Because I am a non-Jaina who happens to be acquainted to some extent with the scriptural teachings of the Jainas, I have sometimes been asked by Jainas who are well educated but have no specialized knowledge of their own scriptures, what in my view constituted the special merit of Jaina teachings. This enquiry is very natural as we all desire to know how we appear in others' eyes, or what in us impresses others as singling us out from among our confreres. My considered answer to the query has always been this : "the teachings of *Ahimsā* and the doctrine of *Karma*". Somewhat to my surprise my interrogators have invariably been left cold and unimpressed, perhaps a little disappointed too, by my reply, the reason for which I failed to guess. At last I found an opportunity of acquainting a well-educated Jaina who is also familiar with the scriptural doctrines of his creed, with my problem, viz., why my reply failed to satisfy his co-religionists and what in the opinion of an average educated Jaina today were the special merits of Jainism ? His explanation was very revealing : to the average educated Jaina of today, the special excellence of Jainism consisted in the *Syādvāda* (or *Anekāntavāda* or *Saptabhangī Naya*). Quite true. All who are acquainted with the history of Jaina philosophical thought know fully well what enormous labours were devoted by the Jaina thinkers of the past to the development of this system of Logic, so much so that in the eyes of many a schoolman among them *Syādvāda* came to be regarded as a collective name for all the doctrines of Jainism. To the philosopher, the logician and more particularly to the polemicist, the present-day much-elaborated form of *Syādvāda* may be the most outstanding and distinguishing feature of Jaina thought, but my humble way of approach to the study of any philosophical or religious thought starts with its history, its origin, its predecessors, its place among its contemporaries and compeers. The average Indian mind is probably not always very alive to the time-factor in evaluating the relative importance not only of abstract but also of concrete matters. In my contacts with very senior Indian scholars in different branches of Indian philosophy and religion, I have sometimes asked some of them, all

very eminent in their own fields, about the chronology of particular thoughts or the geneology of particular developments, but their replies disappointed me. What to them appeared to be matters of very secondary importance—and they had many jokes about historians' obsession with small matters ! —happen to be the primary link in my humble attempt to comprehend a chain of thoughts or events. I fail to understand things properly unless I see them in a correct historical and chronological perspective.

So also in regard to Jainism, I desire to know first of all not what appears to be the most impressive of its products in the eyes of a later generation but what its oldest roots, its original trunk, its early branches, flowers and fruits had been. We do not fully know yet, historically viewed, how or when Jainism originated—orthodox traditions and claims apart—beyond the faint glimpses we get of its probable precursors, viz., a non-Brahmanical ascetical fraternity which owed its origin to mendicants professing non-Vedic beliefs that in their turn might have had their roots in pre-Aryan times. Coming to semi-historical times (*circa* 8th-9th centuries B. C.) we find one such fraternity in the Kashi kingdom (Varanasi), famous in that epoch as the leading kingdom of eastern India, as a monastic order headed by a non-Brahmin of aristocratic birth, Parsvanatha by name. Nearer historical times, i.e., in the 6th-5th centuries B.C. we see some of these movements spread further towards the east flourishing in eastern U.P. and Bihar led again by non-Brahmins, of whom one was of noble birth viz., Vardhamana Mahavira. In this connection it should be borne in mind that Magadha in that age witnessed the most active intellectual ferment that found expression in the speculations of numerous philosophical schools and in the spiritual quest for emancipation from the miseries of the world as evidenced in the doctrines and practices of a number of religious sects, among whom the Ajivikas were, in point of time, the immediate seniors and the Buddhists the immediate juniors of Mahavira among the leading non-Brahmanical heterodox creeds of the era. The subsequent evolution of Jainism is well known and need not be recounted for my present purposes.

2

To all ardent religious men, conduct is the essence of religion, the road to moral and spiritual progress. None however would underrate the value of a correct intellectual and emotional approach as, to quote Umasvati, author of the *Tattvārthādhigama Sūtra*, the earliest text that codified Jaina teachings in a compressed aphoristic style, "the

path to *Mokṣa* (liberation, emancipation from worldly bondage) consists in right belief, right knowledge and right conduct". Similarly in Buddha's teachings the Noble Eightfold Path that led to *Nirvāṇa* constituted a co-ordination of correct thought, feeling and conduct based on a proper understanding of the Four Noble Truths that revealed intellectually the all-pervasiveness of sorrow in the world and the reason for it ; but at the same time Buddha never tired of emphasising the importance of conduct—in fact when we analyse his utterances minutely, it would even appear that to him moral conduct ranked above everything else in one's strivings for *Nirvāṇa*.

If then, moral conduct is such an essential and primary—some would even say leading and most important—requirement in religious life, let us consider how our great religious teachers have dealt with it. Parsva, Mahavira and Buddha, each of them in his respective system and discipline, summed up the requirements of moral behaviour under the "Vows", variously regarded as being four to six, generally five in number, and remarkably enough, the very first one of this number, as laid down in the teachings of all of them, is Abstention from Destruction of Life or Non-killing of Living Beings, i.e., *Ahimsā*, in deed, word, and thought ; its breach is not to be committed by oneself nor caused to be committed by another, nor should its breach by another be a cause of delight to one. So thoroughgoing then is the Vow in both its application and implication ; and judged from its first place among the Vows, so cardinal is its importance.

Now let us try to have a view of the Vow for a while in its contemporary setting and against its historical background, or in other words within its environmental atmosphere, i.e., during the era when we meet it for the first time, viz., in Parsva's teachings.

3

It is well-known that the Aryan immigrants into India were great meat-eaters and their religious rites involved an enormous number of animal sacrifices. In their prayers to the gods, they craved destruction of their enemies—a mental attitude which is the very reverse of *Ahimsā*. The blood-curdling accounts of holocausts and hecatombs in Puranic legends are well-known.

About the religious life of the pre-Aryan Indians of the Indus Valley Civilisation (it should be remembered that the term is now used only as a formal nomenclature, for later archaeological excavations have

established that this civilisation had spread on all sides very far beyond the Indus Valley), we do not yet know enough beyond that they worshipped figurines of the Mother Goddess and other deities, benign as well as malign, in their homes. Much doubt has recently been cast by historians on the earlier assumption that they were phallus worshippers ; what had hitherto been regarded as being phallic symbols, are now supposed to have been architectural pieces, to serve purposes yet unascertained. Whether there was worship of any over-all deity in any central shrine, a temple as in Egypt or a Ziggurat as in Sumer and Babylon, is not yet known. The so-called "Citadel" in Mahenjodaro, yet unexcavated because of the presence of the ruins of an ancient Buddhist *Stūpa* on the topmost stratum, may in fact have been neither a military structure as its present nomenclature presumed nor a royal building of some sort, but some kind of an edifice of great religious significance, perhaps of supreme importance to the population, as may be surmised from the presence of the Buddhist shrine on the site, built in historical times, because in India it is traditional and customary to build nothing but a religious shrine on the ruins of an older shrine (compare the Great *Stūpa* of Nalanda which has seven layers of reconstruction) or in other words, never to build a sacred structure on the ruins of a secular one and never to build a secular structure on the ruins of a sacred one ; so the principle was, as it were, sacred on sacred, secular on secular (monastery No. 1 at Nalanda was rebuilt nine times, each time on the ruins of the previous structure), and never *vice versa*, from which we infer that the "Citadel" was a religious edifice, the memory whereof lingered on even till early historical times culminating in the building of the Buddhist shrine on its ruins. Comparable in this connection is also the fact that a cremation ground in India always remains as such, i.e., wherever we find a fairly old cremation ground, we may conclude that it was the same ever since the locality came to be inhabited ; therefore the cremation ground on the eastern bank of the stream north of Maniyar Math at Rajgir, where dead bodies are brought from all the surrounding countryside today, may be presumed to have been the cremation ground of Rajgir even in the days of king Bimbisara (Seniya, Srenika of Jaina literature), from where Buddha collected rags for making his wearing apparel.

But although we do not know much yet about the institutional religion of the Indus Valley people, we know that bathing and washing was a ritual with them as inferred from the Great Bath of Mahenjodaro and the elaborate arrangement of bath-rooms and drainage in the residential buildings. Bathing or washing ceremonially before undertaking any important work, offering prayer and *pūjā*, etc., were probably as

assiduously practised as is done in India even now. The tradition is clearly reflected in the formula always repeated in Jaina narrative literature of people going to their daily work or on important errands as : *ṇhāyā kaya-bali-kammā kaya-koua-maṅgala-ppāyacchittā* (in Sanskrit *snātah kṛta-bali-karmā kṛta-kautuka-maṅgala-prāyascittah*). What we have so far considered about the religious practices of these ancient people, yields however no evidence of animal sacrifice in religious rites—*bali-karman* was meant as worshipping a deity with offerings, gifts or presents, of flowers, etc. ; now the word *bali* in Bengali means principally animal sacrifice in Shakta rites. The cutting asunder of a dummy or effigy of an animal or even of some large-sized fruit like a pumpkin for instance, as a symbolical substitute for a living animal was also figuratively meant by the term at one time.

Though it is yet unknown if they killed animals in connection with religious rites, surely in their food habits the Indus Valley people killed animal life in abundance, for, as skeletal remains and pictorial representations on potsherds show, meat and fish were common articles of diet among them.

To revert to Vedic practices. The mode of killing an animal for the sacrificial altar involved the utmost cruelty—the victim was strangled to death, its nostrils and ears were stuffed up in order to kill it by suffocation (to conserve the blood, as representing the life-force within the body ?), a spike was thrust into the anal orifice, and the head was struck with heavy blows, as we learn from the *Baudhāyana Gṛhya Sūtra*. Even till later times, a calf was slaughtered on the arrival of a welcome guest in order to serve him with tender veal ; serving of meat in *śrāddha* feasts in honour of the dead remained a common practice in many parts of the country as the late Puranic statements show. Puranic literature again refers to many a well-known story of royal personages going out into the forests for hunting and meeting with various adventures and gaining strange experiences. In this connection are mentioned sages practising penances in forests and ascetical *aśramas* or hermitages where celebrated teachers also taught various subjects to residential students, young as well as grown up.

4

India's population consisted not only of the civilised Indus Valley people and the semi-civilised Vedic Aryan immigrants but also of a large number of others of different racial stocks and cultural levels. The Magadhans appear to have developed a culture of their own which

rivalled that of the Indo-Aryans around 800 B.C. All old lands again are inhabited by primitive aboriginals, among whom the propitiation of deities, mostly malevolent, by offering them slaughtered animals' blood and flesh is as common a religious practice as for instance is the worship of snakes and trees, stocks and stones. The ancient Jews and Arabs, what to speak of the Aryans, and the ancient inhabitants of Greece and Rome, even after attaining a fairly respectable degree of civilisation, were accustomed to kill animals for sacrifice to deities. The Shaktas and Tantriks of India have their own elaborate occult explanation of how the life-force, as represented by the living, i.e., gushing blood freshly shed, of animals offered in sacrifice to deities, redounds to the benefit of the sacrificer by the magical influence of the *mantras* uttered by himself or by the priest who acts as an intermediary between him and the deity. Many beliefs and practices of the primitive mind survive among civilised people, though in rationalised or disguised forms, sometimes highly so, say modern psychologists and sociologists. If we examine analytically many of our Hindu religious notions or social practices, we shall not fail to discover the truth of this theory of the scientists.

5

Coming to historical times we find in Buddhist and Jaina scriptures many references to hunters, fowlers, butchers and fishermen, shops where meat, fish and egg preparations were sold, and to the food habits of the people as being largely non-vegetarian. Stories told in the Buddhist *Vinaya Piṭaka* report many instances of Buddha and his disciples having been served with meat dishes when invited to meals in the houses of well-to-do people. Buddhists were not averse to eating non-vegetarian food provided the three conditions, same as in the Jaina Vow of non-killing, were satisfied, viz., that one himself should not kill, he should not cause someone else to kill, nor delight in someone else's killing life. The present-day Maniyar Math of Rajgir appears to have been the principal shrine of ancient Rajagriha in Buddha and Mahavira's time. When first excavated, large pits were discovered here full of the skeletal remains of animals, presumably slaughtered in sacrifice. The *Mahābhārata* refers even to human sacrifices offered by Jarasandha, the legendary king of Rajagriha in the Epics. The lamb that Buddha is said to have rescued from being slaughtered along with a large number of other animals offered in sacrifice by king Bimbisara, might have formed part of the bloody ritual performed periodically in the Maniyar Math in those days.

6

Enough has been said above of the extent of killing animal life both for food and as a religious rite in ancient India. Let us conclude this topic with some glimpses of conditions that prevailed in Asoka's times, i.e., nearly two and a half centuries after Mahavira and Buddha. Asoka says in Rock Edict 1 that in his palace kitchen "*many hundred thousands* of animals were killed everyday for the sake of curry". Making due allowance for the flowery exaggeration in respect of the number, this statement gives us a contemporary picture of the general food habits of men of means. In Rock Edict 4 he says "In times past, for many hundreds of years, ever increased the killing of animals and the hurting of living beings". In Rock Edict 8 is said "In times past, kings used to go out on pleasure-tours. In these, hunting and similar other amusements took place".

We must recall gratefully all the steps Asoka took for preventing cruelty to animals, for the first time by a historical king in India, not merely because he was a Buddhist. He was deeply interested in the teachings as well as in the welfare of all the other religious sects as well, and he repeatedly declared in his Edicts ; among these sects, next to the followers of Vedic Brahmanism, the Jainas (Nirgranthas as he calls them by their older name) were the most prominent and numerically the largest. He made large gifts to all sects and paid honours to all of them ; he appointed special Ministers called Dharma Mahamatras not only for the Buddhists but for looking after the welfare of the Jainas and other sects as well (Rock Edicts 7 and 12 ; Pillar Edict 7), and as we have already noted, the teaching of *Ahimsā* was preached by the Jainas long before the emergence of Buddhism.

Of the "*Dharma*" as preached by Asoka, an important item was *Ahimsā*, e.g., "Non-killing of animals is commendable" (Rock Edict 3) ; "Has now been promoted by the *Dharma* instructions of the Beloved of the gods, king Priyadarsin (i.e., Asoka himself), the non-killing of animals, non-hurting of living beings", etc. (Rock Edict 4) ; "Therein (i.e. in *Dharma*) these take place ... non-killing of animals" (Rock Edict 11) ; "These are the *Dharma* regulations as have been ordered by me—'these various animals are inviolable', etc." (Pillar Edict 7).

In addition to preaching *Ahimsā*, Asoka took these positive measures to enforce it in actual practice, viz., he forbade the killing of any living being for sacrificial purposes (Rock Edict 1). Let us not overlook the hostile reaction that this order must have produced among

the great majority of his subjects viz., the Hindus who followed the Vedic cult and others, such as the aboriginal tribes and the forerunners of the Shaktas who killed animals as a religious rite. Further he forbade the *Samāja* festivals, i.e., periodical gatherings of a large number of people who participated in games, racing, gambling, singing and dancing and other amusements besides indulging in various kinds of revelries with the accompaniment of drinking, meat-eating, etc. (Rock Edict 1). This measure too must have given rise to widespread discontent among the populace. In the same Edict he refers to the killing of animals for the palace kitchen being reduced to only two peacocks and a deer, and that deer again not always, and "even these three animals shall not be killed in future". In Rock Edict 8 is recorded his giving up the royal hunt, a gorgeously brilliant and pompous state function as described by Megasthenes in connection with Chandragupta's life. In Pillar Edict 5 he gives a long list of various animals that were declared inviolable by him and of the male animals which were forbidden to be castrated ; again, "husks containing living beings (viz. insects) are not to be burnt ; forests are not to be burnt either needlessly or for killing animals ; one animal is not to be fed with another animal" ; on certain *tithis* or lunar days catching and selling of fish, the killing of certain kinds of animals and the the branding of certain others were forbidden.

In India's history, after Asoka only another powerful Emperor viz., Akbar issued orders for the prevention of cruelty to animals and that was done by the influence of the celebrated Jaina teacher Hiravijaya whom Akbar had summoned to his court. Another king, though not so powerful as Asoka or Akbar, viz., Kumarapala of Gujarat in the 12th century, also did the same under the influence of the great Jaina teacher Hemachandra.

7

After this rapid survey of conditions generally preceding, contemporaneous with and following the rise of Parsva-Mahavira-Buddha's teachings on non-killing of and non-injury to animal life, I should like to pose this question, viz., how did this *Ahimsā* cult come into being, historically noticeable for the first time in Parsva's Vow, when there appear to be no earlier roots for it in history or in tradition (I overlook for the moment the claim of the Jainas that their *Tīrthankaras* had preached all their Doctrines in the hoary past) ? Later Vedic literature is aware of the need of practising *Ahimsā* ; Upanishadic thought and speculations (to be dated roughly as not being much older in origin than Mahavira and Buddha in all probability) and the *Gītā* (compiled

not earlier probably than *circa* 2nd century B.C.) preach it no doubt, but nowhere does the doctrine find such prominence, importance and elaborate development as in Jaina teachings. That Parsva-Mahavira-Buddha and the Vedic *Brāhmaṇa-Āraṇyaka* thoughts (born of the mingling of pre-Aryan priestly theological speculations and Vedic priestly practices) culminating in the *Upaniṣads* shared a common religio-theosophical atmosphere and socio-moral background is not to be disputed, but that does not apear to offer a fully satisfactory explanation of how the doctrine of *Ahimsā* came to play such a major role in Jaina thought as it did not do in that of any other of its Brahmanical contemporaries. In the absence of clearly established data, we have to have recourse to some extent to speculation with regard to probabilities.

Associated closely with Parsva and Mahavira's teaching on *Ahimsā* are to be found the teachings of rigorous asceticism, penances and mortification of the flesh ; the all-importance of the individual soul, speculations on its nature and activities ; total independence of all thoughts about an all-soul or a supreme deity, or of the need for propitiating it or seeking its favours or grace for the individual soul's spiritual upliftment or emancipation ; the individual soul's bondage in mundane existence and its *own* efforts for liberation from it, etc. Consider further the tremendous emphasis Jaina thought placed on ethical conduct as determining everything good in our lives and as leading to the soul's attainment of *Mokṣa* ; as also the doctrine of *Karma*—"good or bad as you sow, exactly so do you reap"—as its inseparable counterpart, another item of religious life that finds the most far-reaching elaboration in Jainism.

How surprisingly do these features contrast with Vedic Brahmanical thought and practice of the times in which *karma* primarily meant performance of Vedic rituals ; ethical conduct waited as it were, in the ante-chamber ; the soul in worldly bondage attained liberation by the grace of the gods ; the chief agent in the world process is the all-pervading *Brahman*, of whom the individual soul, *Ātman*, is, so to speak, a spark or reflection ; and, the merits of renunciation and ascetical practices begin to be recognised. With regard to the last factor, a question arises, viz., is it normally to be expected that a semi-barbarous people of semi-nomadic habits as the Aryan immigrants into India were, whose fore-runners had been cruel conquerers (as held by modern historians) who burnt, looted, killed, destroyed, burst embankments to flood human habitations, exulting in the successes they achieved by quick mobility by riding on horseback and by using iron weapons (harder and more effective than other metals)—both unknown to the people who

inhabited India at the time, in spite of their higher civilisation and culture—and intoxicated with all the enjoyments they regaled themselves with on the soil of India, is it normally to be expected, one may ask, for such a people to be thinking of renunciation and asceticism after only a few centuries, not more than five or six, of fully settling down in their new homeland ? Very possibly not. We have therefore to look elsewhere for the roots of Jaina and kindred trends of thought. Intermingling of several ways of life and thought gives rise no doubt to exchange of ideas inevitable in co-existence in a common atmosphere, but we are speaking now of probable origins, not of formed or finished results.

The Aryan tribes on emigrating from their native homeland went to and settled down in many other lands to the east and west besides India, but in none of these are found the ancient traces of ascetical, monastic, pessimistic creeds practising *Ahimsā*, vegetarianism, mortification of the flesh, an itinerant life, or speculating on the nature and qualities of the individual soul, *Ātman* or *Jīva*, or on rebirth and *Karma*, on the lines of the Jainas and other similar sects of ancient India. None of the other mighty cultures also that the yet more ancient world saw, viz., the Egyptians, the Sumerians or the Babylonians etc. produced any such trends which therefore appear to be wholly Indian in origin. When such trends are at all met with in later days in other lands they can mostly be traced to Indian influences transported abroad by various agencies.

We have thus to infer that these trends arose in pre-Aryan India, probably as an off-shoot of the civilisation of the times. It is here most probably that the roots lay of the earliest phases of Indian monastic-ascetical beliefs and practices, of which the oldest representatives in historical times were the Jainas. Modern scholars have pointed out various shades of views as held in Jainism to be reminiscent of primitivism, such as the soul possessing a size co-extensive with the body it inhabits during worldly bondage ; the soul being imparted various *Leśyās* (colours, tastes, smells and feelings) by different kinds of actions, etc. One of the views, no doubt born of considerable reflection and human sympathies, held by these early thinkers was *Ahimsā*, derived from a belief in the existence of an undying entity or *Jīva* inhabiting the body, combined with a belief in the inexorable retributive operation of the law of *Karma*, and its inseperable counterpart, the law of rebirth, all of which being the products of thoughtful and observant minds. Buddha did not believe in the existence of an individual soul, yet he

believed in *Karma* and rebirth, and so our assumption holds good in respect of his teachings as well.

As time flowed on, more and more thought was given apparently to broaden the philosophical as well as the ethical basis of *Ahimsā* particularly among the Jainas, one of them being formulated thus : the *Jīva* must run the full gamut of the consequences of its *Karma* before it can attain *Mokṣa* ; attainment of *Mokṣa* is every *Jīva's* imperative duty and nothing must be done to impede its fulfilling that duty undisturbed ; impediments to the fulfilment of that duty only intensifies and prolongs the *Jīva's* sufferings in worldly bondage ; if one *Jīva* disturbs the running of the full span of another *Jīva's* life at any particular stage by killing or hurting it, it commits thereby a sin for very obvious reasons, the evil consequences of which will boomerang back on the disturber itself, for it is the moral duty of every *Jīva* to help each other in attaining *Mokṣa*, not to impede it, for the sake of the common good of both.

Another reason for the observance of *Ahimsā*, derived from or as a slight variant of the above, is stated thus, viz., all *Jīvas* desire to live and not to die, therefore destruction of life should be given up. This again emphasises the law of reciprocity, "do unto others as you wish others to do unto you", so essential for living a corporate life in society in the company of one's fellow travellers, as we all must do in this world.

To a Jaina Nun

LEONA SMITH KREMSER

My dear, indeed did this frail one
At that state whose only possession was permission
Forty-five days endure without fruit and seed
Nor even tender drop upon the grass
And two days after yield the breath.

All the while the universe not thus wise
In keeping to repose amid objects
Love and hatred for the cause deceiving
Still, under sway of that reed ot constancy
Came forth as universal penitence.

The gods bowed down beside the earth
While there a hushed voice was overheard
"Ago and away, was her name Surabhi ?"
My dear, indeed at that hour that will never return
To all living beings, the very dust gave fragrance.

Ref : "Last Journey", Pages 84, *Jain Journal*, October, 1968.

Kapila as seen from the viewpoint of Kunda-Kunda

PRADYUMNA KUMAR JAIN

Kapila and Kunda-Kunda are the two lustrous jewels of ancient thinking of India. They are the architects of two monumental works of philosophy, the former of *Sāmkhya-Darśana* and the latter of *Samaya-sāra*. These works reveal a richness of intellect and a depth of insight which are indeed unique contributions of ancient thought. Kapila instituted a new system of thought in the Vedic tradition, while Kunda-Kunda started a new era in the Jaina thought. But since chronologically the era of Kunda-Kunda falls after that of Kapila, the former took into account all the tenets of the Samkhya and suggested various modifications—though very subtle in nature. It would henceforth be quite relevant to study critically the Samkhya philosophy from the view point of Kunda-Kunda.

The Samkhya and the Jaina systems, a *priori* advocate the dualism of ontological entities in the form of Spirit and Matter and endeavour to explain the whole secret of creation in terms of these. It is, therefore, essential first to appreciate the tenets of dualism of the Samkhya, so that it may be comparatively easy to take a precise look at the modifications made by Kunda-Kunda.

The central theme of the Samkhya system can briefly be put as follows : reality comprises of *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* or Spirit and Matter. The former is manifold, pure, changeless ; the latter is primarily one, but is ever-mutable. It evolves the material world out of itself and re-absorbs it at the time of deluge. The three constituents of the *prakṛti*, i.e., *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* get disturbed by the mere presence of spirit and for the sake of the latter's enjoyment. Thus the evolution of the *prakṛti* is materially caused by itself, and formally by the individual spirits. Spirit is intelligent, while *prakṛti* is non-intelligent. The mechanical work of *prakṛti* is perceived by the self-luminous reason of *puruṣas*. Through this act of perceiving the spirit erroneously identifies itself with the unsentient matter, as a result of which it gets bondage. In the same way the spirit gets released, as soon as it, through its discriminatory knowledge, views the matter in latter's right perspective. Bondage is thus the state of self-hypnosis of the *puruṣa*. *Puruṣa* takes no part in material change. It exists in an ever-liberated form. Thus

realistically bondage and release are the attributes of the *prakṛti* and have no real significance for *puruṣa*.[1]

Comparing the Samkhya position as enunciated above with the position of Kunda-Kunda we now find a point of agreement between the two, that is dualism on absolute level ; though they differ on the nature of constituent entities of dualism. Kapila, holds that the *puruṣa* is an unchanged and intelligent entity.[2] It is an extrinsic cause of the change.[3] The intrinsic or material cause is the unevolved *pradhāna*, for three attributes of worldly life, i.e. pleasure, pain and indifference can have their origin only in the ultimate cause of the world corresponding with its three *guṇas*, namely : *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*.[4] *Puruṣa* merely indulges in what is presented by the *prakṛti* before it.[5] Hence through this so-felt empirical identity it suffers the consequences for itself in the form of worldly change along with its various modifications, like pleasure, pain and indifference. Kunda-Kunda though agrees here with the position of Samkhya so far as the nature of *puruṣa's* indulgence into the worldly processes is concerned, yet he polemizes the possibility of such an indulgence on the basis of *puruṣa's* character being inactive and flawless through and through. Kunda-Kunda urges, that if the spirit is devoid of change totally, there is no problem of worldliness to it ; for various passions like anger, aversion, etc., causing the construction of worldly processes will not be found in the spirit. Or, granting, that the world as such exists, and it is matter which, after having transformed itself into the modes of passions, provides chances to the spirit to be likewise, then the question arises, whether matter compels the spirit to be passionate while it is or not intrinsically to be likewise ? If it is not condusive to pssions intrinsically while it is getting passionate, then it is possible that one substance can drive the other in the way it is not liable to be essentially. If it is so, then the uniqueness of each substance will be a farce and dualism will be at a stake. If it itself tends to be likewise intrinsically, then the dynamism of spirit is self-proved. Thus the *Samkhya* theory of changelessness of spirit is, untenable.

Moreover, without changeability in *puruṣa* how is its being enjoyer and knower proved ? The term enjoyment implies feeling ; that is, feeling something which was not being felt previously. This shows

[1] Intro. to *Samkhya Karika* ed. by S. S. Suryanarayana Shastri, pp, *ix*, *x*.
[2] *Samkhya Karika*, 19.
[3] *Ibid*, 21.
[4] *Ibid*, 12.
[5] *Ibid*, 20.

that the *puruṣa* is changeable. If it is argued, that feeling implies pleasure, pain and indifference, which are alien attribute to the *puruṣa*, then the credit for enjoyment (*bhoga*) should go to the *prakṛti*, and not to the *puruṣa* at all. With regards to its being knower it may be asked, whether knowing is its intrinsic character or not ? If it is, then the substance must be identical with its character or function, and character being changeable the substance must also be likewise. If it is not, then it is asked, as to how is it related with an external attribute, while relation is not included in the main postulates of the Samkhya ? Moreover with which substance is this attribute of knowing intrinsically one ? For, without substance no attribute can survive. Since it is not one with the *puruṣa*, it must be so with the *prakṛti*. Then the *prakṛti* will happen to be intelligent, which is opposed to the basic hypothesis.[6] If the spirit's unchangeability is proved analogically, that it reflects the change without changing itself, as a mirror mirrors different things exposing the whole changeability of the world while itself remaining unchanged throughout, still then the above arguments against unchangeability do not go astray. First of all the analogy is not complete, for various reflections emitting from the mirror have no meaning to its own essential being, because it is not a sentient being ; whereas the so-called reflections in *puruṣa* have meaning to it, for the *puruṣa* is a sentient entity. Secondly, reflections of a mirror are perceived or known by a third agency, whereas for those of the *puruṣa* there is no such third agency. Thus mirroring and knowing should not be equated one with another as identical terms even analogically. If it is done so, then from the viewpoint of the function of mirroring the mirror is also changing, for function is identical with its substance. The Jaina asserts that the same thing can be viewed from different angles of vision at the same time and place. So the *puruṣa* of the Samkhya is changeable as it is viewed from its functioning in various ways, and it is unchangeable from the viewpoint of its pure existence or substance. So the Jaina instead of proving the falsity of the Samkhya position with regard to reality rather supports it. What he refutes is only its onesidedness of the viewpoint. Kapila advocates only the substantial point of view ignoring the other side of the substance in toto, which has brought to him a bit inconsistent position.

Further, one-sided-enunciation of spirit's character regarding its being pure through and through invites criticism against the possibility of evolution of the *prakṛti* and worldly processes. Kapila holds the view that the mere presence of the *puruṣa* disturbs the equillibrium of the *pradhāna*, and the latter knits the enigma of the world for the sake of

[6] *Samkhya Karika*, 11.

puruṣas' enjoyment.[7] Here, if mere presence is taken to be sufficient for the evolution, then that presence will never disappear from the scene, for the existence of the *puruṣas* is eternal. Therefore the involution of the *prakṛti* at the time of deluge is an impossibility. With regard to the evolution also a point is raised, as to how could, at the very outset of evolution, the *pradhāna* be aware of the purpose of spirit, for it being non-intelligent and insentient entity can not know it itself, and Kapila does not postulate any such third agency in the name of God or anyone else. Hence evolution seems a non-concrete hypothesis. In this regard the Jaina view is, that to suppose the beginning of the worldly cycle is to invite difficulties of various types. The foremost difficulty of them is to do away one side of the worldly life or the so-called evolution. For, when you strive to explain the beginning, you have to postulate the first initiative either from the side of the spirit or the matter. One of them must be active first. As in the case of the Samkhya system the *pradhāna* becomes actvie with the passive presence of the spirit. Thus the change and activity remain attached with the *prakṛti* and *puruṣa* remains passive and inactive all along upto the end. In this way mutuality between spirit and the matter is marred, and the question which was dominant at the very inception of the evolution as to why and without active stimuli from the side of spirit does the *prakṛti* give response to it, stands unanswered upto the last. Hence the beginninglessness (*anāditā*) seems to be the safest course to explain the mundane cycle of life as adopted by the Jaina. Spirit and matter both, says Kunda-Kunda, are active participants of worldly existence, in which not only does the matter give response to the perverted calls of spirit but also the *vice-versa.*[8] And this cycle of mutual response knows no beginning.

Still the Jaina is not much different from the position adopted by the Samkhya system, as Kunda-Kunda himself mentions here and there, that for every mundane activity the responsible entity is *karman.*[9] The spirit is pure through and through. What to say of regressive trend of worldly life, even progressive trend of it, like auspicious elevation, stages of spiritual upgoing (*guṇasthānas*) etc., are not concerned with the spirit.[10] Such an enunciation is meant particularly from the absolute point of view (*naya*). At another place from some other point of view he claims that the soul is pervasive through every nerve of mundane processes.[11] It is *the* entity, that commits vice and virtue, that

[7] *Samkhya Karika,* 56-57.
[8] *Pancastikaya Samayasara,* 60.
[9] *Ibid,* 58
[10] *Samayasara,* 65-68, 50-55 ; Niyamasara, 38-48.
[11] *Samayasara,* 56.

regresses and progresses, that suffers pleasure and pain, that gets passionate and indifferent, etc., etc. Thus at each step the spirit is visible, which does every act whatsoever, and gets bound and released.[12] It acts, enjoys[13] and knows ; yet from some other point of view, just like Samkhya it neither gets bound, nor released, nor does it act, nor enjoys[14] but merely perceives and knows as does the liberated one[15]. Thus the Jaina does not refute the doctrine as such, but refutes its onesidedness only. We cannot assert absolutely that the spirit is ever-pure and it stands immune at each step, because it can also be asserted as impure and well-attached with others from some other point of view. Hence it is correct, that the two contradictory statements can be asserted with regard to the same reality at a moment ; but, alongwith it a misunderstanding, that the two contradictory modifications can exist in actuality at a single moment in a thing, should not be allowed. Just as, keeping in view the future modifications, which are potential now in the soul, the soul may be predicated as pure ; while from the viewpoint of the past potential and present actual it may, on similar grounds, be predicated as impure one. Both of the propositions may be asserted rightly at a time, but both the modes—pure and impure, cannot be actual at one time. Hence while the Samkhya speaks of the all-purity of the spirit in actuality, it cannot *actually* contend it as impure also. Moreover if it is not impure, then the worldly life is impossible, which is opposed to the empirical fact. Or if the worldly processes are exclusively attributed to the matter and spirit does not participate in it actively, as the Samkhya actually does, then the process of evolution is unintelligible. In this regard even if granting, that it is unintelligible, contending that somehow the evolution starts ; still orderly evolution of the non-intelligent *prakṛti* cannot be intelligible. "The mutability of *prakṛti* can," as is rightly remarked by S. S. Suryanarayan Shastri in his introduction to the *Sāmkhya-Kārikā*, "in the circumstances, account at best for some kind of changing world, not for an ordered universe of the kind we perceive and reason about. We should indeed, expect a chaos not a cosmos. What order there is should be accidental and it is not reasonable to hope that such evolution will subserve any purpose, least of all, the release of the spirit."[16]

Now there is another point of difference between the Jaina and Samkhya schools of philosophy, that is the oneness of *prakṛti*. The

[12] *Niyamasara*, 49.
[13] *Ibid*, 18.
[14] *Ibid*, 47.
[15] *Samayasara*, 75.
[16] c.f. Intro. to *Samkhya Karika*, p. xi.

Samkhya school advocates, that the *prakṛti* is one, changing and non-intelligent ; *sattva, rajas* and *tamas* are its three *guṇas*.[17] But here the term *guṇa* has not been used in the usual sense of attribute that is used in reference to the substance but as constituent factors of the *prakṛti*. Thus it is asked : In what way is the *prakṛti* claimed to be one ? If it is from collective point of view (*saṃgraha naya*), then it is relatively, not absolutely, one. Moreover on the basis of the same logic the Samkhya philosophy should adopt a similar attitude with respect to *puruṣas* also, where it has absolutely maintained pluralism without any notion of their being one.[18] Or, if it adopts distributive viewpoint (*vyavahāra naya*), then it should also presume *prakṛti* as many. Otherwise the arguments, the Samkhya system employs to refute the possibility of one spirit, may be employed against its own doctrine of one *prakṛti*. That, separate bodies being subject to separate birth and death, pleasure and pain are endowed with separate spirits, which prove the manifoldness of the *prakṛti*. Had it been one, it would have been one body bearing one birth and death for all the spirits. If it is urged against this argument, that the Unevolved Primal Nature is one, whereas with the association of intellect its evolved form is manifold, then on the basis of the theory of *satkāryavāda* this manifoldness must be present in the Unevolved. If it is so, then the *prakṛti* is manifold while relatively it is also one.

Now a point of agreement between the two systems is observed with regard to the importance of intellect. Both the systems in question hold unanimously, that it is through intellect (*buddhi*) that the whole creation takes birth and is preserved. Intellect causes various types of thought-activities like attachment, aversion, passion, etc., to be generated by the spirit.[19] But regarding the origin of intellect both of them disagree. In the Samkhya system intellect is the evolute of *pradhāna* while it is in close association of *puruṣas*. Later it takes shape of egotism (*ahaṃkāra*),[20] whereas the *puruṣa* remains as it is. Moreover the Samkhya on the basis of its conception of one *prakṛti* propounds a theory of cosmic creation or the creation of all *padārthas*. Whereas in Jainism, intellect is not absolutely a bye-product of the matter, but it is spirit itself which in its *kārmic* state transform itself into intellect. Therefore in mundane state the spirit is the main agent of the whole process. It is the initiater as well as the sufferer of all the worldly proceedings.[21] Thus intellect and egotism both according to the Jaina,

[17] *Samkhya Karika*, 11.
[18] *Ibid*, 18.
[19] *Ibid*, 23.
[20] *Ibid*, 22.
[21] *Samayasara* with *Atmakhyati*, 125.

get their origin in spiritual entity. Moreover, categories (*padārthas*) in Jainism are fixed and eternal. Hence no question of their creation arises. The term creation, to a Jaina, connotes only the creation of individual bodies. Spirit, in association with five sub-categories of the not-self, i.e. the Matter (*pudgala*), the Medium of Motion (*dharma*), the Medium of Rest (*adharma*), the Space (*ākāśa*) and the Time (*kāla*) causes creation of various bodies liable to continuous chain of birth and death.

The Jaina and the Samkhya schools though disagree doctrinally with each other on the mode of evolution in general, yet wonderfully enough they agree on the mode of evolution in particular or the construction of individual bodies. The Samkhya system maintains, that from egotism evolve five senses of knowing (*jñānendriyas*), five senses of action (*karmendriyas*) and mind (*manas*) from the predominence of *sattva guṇa*, and five *tanmātrās*, subsequently five gross elements (*mahābhūtas*) from the predominence of *tamas guṇa*, while *rajas guṇa* is common to both.[22] In Jainism the soul in the mode of egotism attracts two types of *kārmic* molecules. The first, which consists in the subtlest type of molecules, forms the *kārmic* body of the soul.[23] That is the tiniest origin of the worldly existence, which consists in the original physical strivings, creating possibility of subtle senses (*bhāvendriyas*). The second, which consists in grosser molecules (*no-karma varganās*) cause materially other grosser bodies of worldly existence.[24] In this way *no-karma varganās* are the right substitute of five *tanmātrās* of the Samkhya. In the Samkhya system five *tanmātrās* are the subtle atoms for the material of five gross senses ; in the same way are there *no-karma varganās in* Jainism. Moreover, just like the Samkhya, the Jaina classifies the senses as ten-fold, namely, five affectory senses (*labdhendriyas*) and five effectory senses (*upayogendriyas*),[25] which correspond respectively with the Samkhya classification of five senses of knowing and five other of action.[26]

There is one more point expressed through a verse of the *Sāmkhya Kārikā* worthy to note in comparison with the Jaina doctrine. The verse says :

"Without dispositions (*bhāvas*) there would be no subtle element (*liṅga*), without the subtle elements there would be no development of

[22] *Samkhya Karika*, 22, 23.
[23] *Tattvartha Sutra* with *Sarvartha Siddhi*, 2-36, 37.
[24] *Samayasara* with *Atmakhyati*, 75.
[25] *Tattvartha Sutra*, 2-18.
[26] Pt. Banshi Dhar Vyakaranacarya's 'Jain Darsan-ka Upayogitavad' compiled in the *Varni Abhinandan Granth*, p. 26.

dispositions. Hence creation proceeds in two ways—elemental and intellectual."[27]

The verse shows the reciprocity between intellectual dispositions and elemental development, wonderfully resembling with the Jaina explanation of psychic *karmas* (*bhāva karma*) and material *karmas* (*dravya karma*) respectively. Commenting on the above verse Vacaspati argues against a supposed objection possibly levelled with this explanation, that the argument runs in a vicious circle, that "Each may well be the cause of the other in succession, as the seed is of the tree and the tree of the seed. Even if one pushes the argument upto the so-called first creation, we can go further back and trace the causes in the impressions of dispositions or elements' left over from a prior creation. There is no real difficulty, as we do not admit the world to have had an absolute beginning."[28] If this explanation is taken to be valid, there remains no virtual difference with the Jaina explanation of creation, that posits no beginning for it. The Samkhya maintains, that the subtle body of a bound spirit does exist even at the time of deluge, which becomes the basis of next evolution. This process of evolution and involution of the Samkhya can, to a certain extent, be compared with the cycle of periodic change of the whole cosmos in the progressive (*utsarpiṇī*) and regressive (*abasarpiṇī*) trends, each divided into six successive periods in Jainism.[29] In this way, the Jaina may also be understood, in a limited sense, to be the advocate of evolution and involution with regard to the individual bodies. Categories in general, in his opinion, remain fixed, in which no one is created, nor is destroyed, while according to the Samkhya philosophy they are created aswell as dissolved, but peculiarly enough, the subtle bodies (*sūkṣma śarīra*) are sustained even on the eve of complete deluge. Here a question may be raised, as to what type of unique elements are these subtle bodies made of, which do not merge into the initial stage of the *prakṛti* ? Since it cannot come from any source other than the *prakṛti*, then why is it saved from being one with the Primal Nature at the time of deluge ? It seems quite an unintelligible position of the Samkhya creation. The evolution of universal categories looks, hereby, a system of multiple difficulties. But the Jaina explanation of similar type of creation of individual bodies on the basis of the theory of fixed universal categories seems satisfactory, when he explains that one spirit may assume only five types of bodies, i.e. physical (*audarika*), fluid (*vaikriyaka*), assimilative

[27] c.f. *Samkhya Karika*, 52.
[28] c.f. *Ibid.*, 52, 85.
[29] *Tattvartha Sutra*, 3-27.

(*āhāraka*), electrical (*taijasa*) and molecular (*kārmaṇa*) ;[30] out of which the last two are too subtle to enjoy the senses[31] and are always attached with the spirit.[32] In addition to them one spirit may assume at the most two more bodies at a time,[33] but those who are born out of the womb (*garbha*) and by spontaneous generation (*sammūrchana*) may have only physical bodies (*audarika*) in addition to electrical and molecular bodies.[34] Thus when one life sets to evolve, it assumes some gross body or bodies excepting the last two ; and at the time of its death or deluge it dessolves the gross body, and transmigrates with the subtle bodies (*sūkṣma śarīra*), which are impreventible everywhere.[35] Thus evolution and involution constantly take place with respect to individual lives ; but on cosmic level, excepting cyclic change, evolution is not intelligible. Further, in this evolution of individual life subtle elements of body cause formation of dispositions in the domain of spirit and in return dispositions cause influx of subtle elements, thus mutuality of self and not-self takes place constantly, and creation proceeds in two ways—elemental and intellectual. The Jaina and Samkhya systems, nevertheless, agree on the main points.

To sum up : The main theme of the Samkhya philosophy is quite in agreement with that of the Jaina philosophy of Kunda-Kunda. Both have a clear-cut belief in the dualism of reality. Spiritual pluralism is also incorporated in both the systems. Both of them preach the organismic evolution in the mutuality of spirit and matter with spirits' liberation as its culminating point. Agreeing so much the Jaina yet differs with the Samkhya on the point of philosophical approach. The Jaina makes the non-absolute approach to reality, while the Samkhya approach is absolute. The Jaina upholds the creation as having no beginning and end, while the Samkhya posits deluge on both the ends.

[30] *Tattvartha Sutra*, 2-36.
[31] *Ibid*, 2-44.
[32] *Ibid*, 2-41, 42.
[33] *Ibid*, 2-43.
[34] *Ibid*, 2-45.
[35] *Ibid*, 2-40.

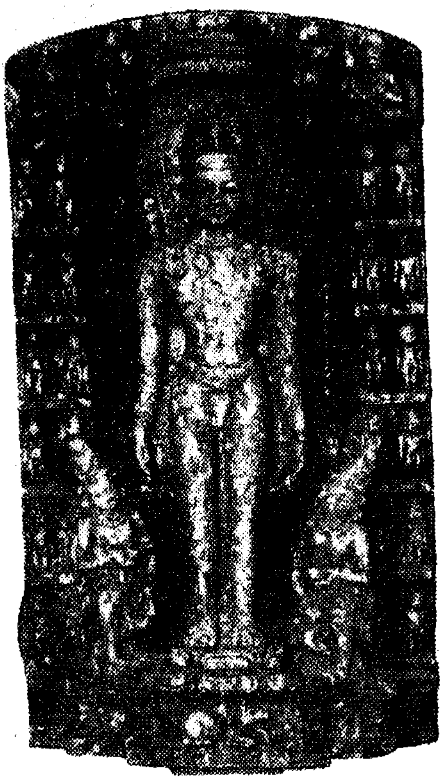


The upper part of the massive image of *Tirthankara* Padmaprabha.

Pakbirra's Shrines of the Emancipated

P. C. Das Gupta

Both to the devout as also to the connoisseurs of art the ruins of Pakbirra close to the streams Silavati and the Kangsavati in Purulia district of West Bengal will appear exceptionally fascinating not only for the calm grandeur and sensitive beauty of sculpted figures scattered near shadows of crumbling shrines but also for bringing about a picturesque glamour of what may be regarded as the legend of the lost. Flanked by distant hills and folds the site mainly comprising of a sprawling mound perched with ancient temples, sculptures and other relics will obviously bear witness to the yearning of the faithful for meditation



Risabhanath (or Adinath)
Circa 10th century A.D.

and purity within an environment of solitude and a bleak landscape. While the large mound having an impressive dimension contains extensive brick structures which are exposed at sections, the three temples yet standing are beautiful examples of *rekha deul* with their symbolic *ratha* foundations, fluted finials, the corbelled entrance and the symmetrical height aside the location of the *sanctum* less remote due to the absence of any spacious frontal porch or the *mukha-maṇḍapa* unlike its being so often conventional with the northern Indian design in its genesis of elaboration. Such monuments will, indeed, recall a general style accepted in Bengal in the early mediaeval epoch. Though there are comparable monuments in Purulia, particularly at Telkupi, Para, Charra and Deulghata recognisable for their oblong turrets (*śikhara*) sprouting above the foundation often without having any adjunct of separate *mukhamaṇḍapa*, the shrines built of carved stones at Pakbirra will represent a delicate and imposing style characteristic of their own conforming as in other instances with the ideals of *Meru* or the *Puruṣa* and thereby, with the symbolism of the ultimate union with the Divine or the realisation as opposed to the primeval polarisation. Apart from revealing the glory of an architectural movement in eastern India which must have its bearing in a wider horizon the shrines of Pakbirra like their counterparts in West Bengal may be regarded as gems defining fulfilment and taste in art. The impressive array of Jaina images

at the site including the peerless statue of *Tīrthankara* Padmaprabha (height : 7′6″) will obviously indicate that the monuments here enshrined the *Jinas* with their accessory divinities and cognisances. Though the ruins bear reminiscence of a vanished

Jaina sculptures on a miniature temple and stele.
Early Mediaeval.





Ambika, *Sasanadevi* of *Tirthankara* Neminatha 9th-10th century A.D.

settlement, the temples and *Tirthankaras* will still reveal an ascent of art in communicating the changeless sublimity of devotion to the Emancipated. In fact, the graceful austerity of the *Tirthankaras* standing in *kāyotsarga* pose will offer a meaning in determination of the Self remaining remote in the world of meditation and supreme knowledge. Thus, as it will be felt, the sculptors concerned with the Jaina art at Pakbirra and at their comparable sites and monuments in India had to carve out figures conveying profound perception along with other divinities, either graceful images of gods, or female *devatās* enticingly beautiful for their sensitive lines and warmth of modulation. In this perspective the Jaina art at Pakbirra has a significance of its own lying at a cross-roads of migration of style from Varendra, Khiching and more western areas. Often carved of chlorite the images of Pakbirra reveal a confident skill of sculptors to envisage an elegant grace of *devatās* following a vocabulary of style that may recall in its appeal some of the beautiful delineations in the Indian art in general as representing the post-Gupta tradition.

This sensitivity and appeal are captivating in the solitary landscape of ancient Manbhum.

Lower part of Parsvanatha. Chlorite.
Circa 10th century A.D.



Illustrations by courtesy of the Directorate of Archaeology, West Bengal.
Photographs by Sri Ranjit Kumar Sen.

Agni-pariksa*

— *a review article* —

K.C. LALWANI

Agni-parīkṣā (Fire-ordeal) is a poetical work by Acarya Tulasi, head of the Terapanth order of the Jainas. Written about a decade back, the book is a good complement to the Hindi Ramayana by the devotee-poet Tulasidas, upholding as it does the cause of Sita and unfolding in details the events after Rama's return from Lanka and corronation, the culmination of which is the fire-ordeal of the first lady of Ayodhya. This imparts to Acarya Tulasi's work a resemblence with that of Bhavabhuti's *Uttara-Rāma-Carita*.

In the cultural integration of India, among many factors the Rama story has a very distinct place so much so that since the First Poet had produced his commendable work, there have been many in different parts of the country at different times who have written on part or whole of this story, so that as years, centuries and millennia have passed, the story has remained as fresh, imparting a unity to the peoples of this sub-continent. In fact, there are several hundred versions of the Ramayana extant in the traditional as well as modern Indian languages, none rigorously following the other, not even the original work by Valmiki, but each presenting the story in a manner that would give the writer supreme joy and ecstacy. For, each writer of this story has had an inspiration and a faith that in re-telling it, he is fulfilling some spiritual mission, each version in consequence differing from the other depending on the writer's spiritual experience and the point which he is keen to emphasize. This apart, each version bears the stamp of time, place and environment in which it is produced. But despite these considerations, not very insignificant in any sense, the thread running through the diverse versions has remained strikingly the same. This point is particularly important to keep in mind while considering any particular version of the Rama story.

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* *Agni-pariksa* (Fire-ordeal) : Acarya Tulasi : Atmaram & Sons, Delhi, 1961 : Pages xx+180 : Prices 6.50.

Acarya Tulasi's work was written after a long walk to Calcutta and back to Rajasthan,—the first of its kind by any Acarya of his order, who had never bothered to go beyond the bounds of Rajasthan and Gujarat. Tulasi introduced a break in this tradition. He was then spending his monsoon retreat at Rajnagar when the idea flashed to him. He started and completed the work that very monsoon working on it till late hours at night after the usual evening prayers when the visitors had left. We have it on the authority of the editor of the work that the Acarya would be producing the work in the darkness of the night under thick shady trees, assisted by Muni Sagarmal 'Sramana', expert in writing in darkness, and Sohanlal Sethia who possessed a wonderful memory. In this way, "the rest of his feet became the motion of his brain", and the work steadily reached completion.

The work is completed in eight cantoes as follows : 1. Return ; 2. Conspiracy ; 3. Banishment ; 4. Repentance ; 5. Revenge ; 6. Re-union; 7. Fire-ordeal; 8. Post-script. Based largely on the earliest Jaina work by Vimala Suri entitled *Paumacariyam* written in *circa* 60 V.S. (c.4 A.D.) *Agni-parīkṣā's* preoccupation is with upholding Sita's honour and chastity against the widespread public discussion about her which had rocked the whole of Ayodhya from the palace to the washerman's abode and forced the hands of Rama as king to take a cruel decision. This action has drawn chastisement of Rama as a husband if not as a king, from many, to which Acarya has only lent his forceful support. This part of the story is no new fabrication and, as is well-known, it runs through all versions of the Ramayana. For, if one accepts her forcible carriage by Ravana, her residence in the latter's palace-garden till her rescue, her acceptance by Rama and her return to Ayodhya, the subsequent public discussion and gossip about her would be but natural in any age, the more so since the people of the capital had no information about her life in Lanka and (as per Hindu sources) of an earlier fire-ordeal there in which Sita's purity was fully demonstrated in the presence of the gods and the demons. *Agni-parīkṣā* gives a succinct description of the expression of this public opinion. In this the poet need be given an autonomy to indulge in fancy as to the trend of discussion which could not surely be favourable to Rama's consort. Even today when the public opinion is much more enlightened, thanks to the innumerable mass media, can we really claim that it is well-balanced and well-reasoned ? If not how can we say or expect the same of public opinion when heresay was the only medium of mass communications. In this, as we shall see as we proceed Acarya Tulasi has done a good job not only in locating the sources of public discussion but also in providing it with suitable context. It is foolish to presume from this, as some of

his motivated adversaries have recently done, that the expression of this public opinion as imagined by him is also the poet's own estimation of the pious lady. There would perhaps have been room for doubt if the poet had stopped at that without opening a window on his own mind ; but one who is constantly in touch with the public, he has taken no chance and gives his own estimate of Sita at so many places throughout the work that it leaves no doubt as to how high up she is in his estimate. Not only that ; but consistant with the democratic spirit of the age which calls for demolishing the shackles that had kept womanhood in bondage all over the world, he has put words in Sita's own mouth which call for a general awakening of women against the age-old torture on them by men. This part, interpolated at suitable places, is, it must be admitted, no mere poetic fancy, but the spirit of the age personified in fine poetry.

The poet has located the expression of public opinion at four places, viz., in the plot organised by Sita's co-wives at the palace, in the report of his trusted intelligence men, in public discussion which he heard with his own ears and in the conversation between the washerman and his wife. At the palace, we have a description in which Sita's co-wives[1] insisted on her drawing a picture of Ravana so that they could get some idea about the man who had carried her away. It is necessary to add here that polygamy was prevallent in India's high society till the other day and it is no wonder that Rama had many wives though Sita alone could share the throne with him. Naturally they were jealous and allowed no opportunity to slip to bring down Sita in the eyes of Rama. Such an opportunity was ready now and they made full use of it. But Sita had never seen Ravana's face and she could only draw his feet. This the co-wives placed on an alter along with other objects of worship to establish that Sita always worshipped Ravana's feet. When Rama came into the harem and enquired what it could be, so said the co-wives :

> What do we know, sire! is this
> The daily worship of thy favorite queen. (p. 29)

But this had no impact on Rama who dismissed the whole thing by saying,

> Why do ye indulge in such a fake irrelevance ? (p. 29)

[1] In Valmiki version, however, we have no mention of Rama's many wives.

Failing in this the co-wives engaged their maid-servants to carry this false story from door to door in the capital which was very effectively done,—as if 'they made sun rise at the midnight'. The poet regrets :

What cruel act it is to smear others with scandal !
To do so is the severest of wasting diseases.
Those who cannot tolerate good moments of others,
Overpowered by jealousy, they indulge in such acts. (p. 29)

Next poured in the report by Rama's "trusted" intelligence men in the following words :

The so-called chaste lady is ill-famed in every home.
Alone did she reside at Lanka for full six months
How do we trust then that her chastity remains unhurt ?
The heart of the Ten-head was always bent on her
To fulfil his desire he would be soft and harsh
Would carry her alone in the Puspaka air-craft
And enjoy life with her in lonely parks.
With letters, instruments and charms at his bid
He had even overpowered gods and goddesses.
Is it then possible to believe that in such hands as this
Her chastity would go untouched and unhurt ? (p. 33)

The trust was wholly misplaced, since these men had already played mercenary in the hands of the co-wives. So they became instruments in carrying further the whole plot. Added they :

There are other ladies, full embodiment of beauty ;
Why not your Majesty! give her up to uphold
the popular wish. (pp. 34)

The argument of the intelligence men was so contrived that it had hardly any gap and so Rama fell almost a prey to the plot, though with a little more caution he could have saved himself. But as a rational being, he desired further verification of the scandal. For, said he unto himself :

Where chastity itself speaks in her wide-open life,
Where the glow of purity shines in her brilliant eyes,
What of Ravana, even the lord of gods would not
overpower her,
And my own heart testifies for her unshakable devotion.

... ...

Out of greed my men may deviated this way or that
Or may have discarded humanity under sheer pressure. (p.35-36)

So Rama decided to go out incognito to verify the correctness of the report. Unfortunately, everywhere the theme of conversation was the same—Sita's stay at Ravana's capital and Rama's acceptance of her. This was rendered particularly distasteful because of his personal involvement. Rama heard the conversation of the elderly people, of the ladies in the household who are wont to indulge in all loose talks, and ultimately, the washerman and his wife,—everywhere the same theme : 'Do not follow Rama and Sita as ideal.' (p. 38). And ultimately comes the people's verdict : 'How does the earth survive such acts of sinfulness.' (p.38). Rama could listen no more and covered his ears with fingers. People were forecasting the near advent of *Kali-Yuga* (Iron Age) wherein, as per the Sastric predictions, there would be devaluation of values and demoralisation of morals. Rama was pinpointed by the elders as the herald of the coming age. The climax was, however, reached in the conversation of the washerman with his wife who had gone out on a mission of adultery and was refused admission into the home. The lady readily cited the example of Sita who after having spent quite a few months in the demon-capital was duly re-installed in Rama's palace (pp. 41-44). Rama could bear no more but turned his steps to come back to his own rest house. It was no more possible to resist a decision however cruel, which ultimately resulted in the banishment of Sita. The conspiracy which started in the plot of Sita's co-wives and gradually poisoned public against the king and his consort came thus to a fulfilment. *Agni-parīkṣā* based on the Jaina sources, gives a more complete account of the conspiracy than any from the Hindu sources, including that of Valmiki, and imparts a naturalness to the cruel decision which is virtually unpreceded. This would at least absolve Rama of a shortsightedness and failure to do justice to his wife, which would otherwise establish hold on the reader's mind, unless a complete picture of the plot is provided. This wide lacuna is now got rid of.

A counter question may arise as to what Rama did to absolve Sita of the baseless scandal of which public opinion had made her a victim. Rama had his own conviction, supported by the counsel of the leading personalities around him—Laksmana, Sugriva, Vibhisana and Hanumana but public opinion was too powerful against which nothing would stand. So against all counsel of wisdom, even against his own conviction, Rama's hands were forced, particularly when the great honour of the great line was at stake. The following words are put by the poet into Rama's mouth :

I know full well, I understand, Sita is flaw-less
But, alas ! in the face of public wrath am I helpless,
So have I arrived at decision aforesaid, by becoming a rock
Discard I Sita to uphold the honour of the racial stock. (p. 50)

The rest of the story is, as it should be : Sita is carried in a chariot and left in a dense forest on the other bank of the Ganges, her spirited message to Rama as conveyed through the charioteer, General Kritanta mukha, Sita's taking shelter with Vajrajangha, Rama's visit to the place where Sita was left and his heart-breaking repentence, birth of Sita's twins, Lavanankusa, marriage of Lavana in the same household, trouble over the marriage of Ankusa when the king of Prithvipura refused the hand of her ward to one whose line is not known, the revelation of the line by Narada who arrives on the spot, the determination of two brothers to take revenge against Rama for the wrong done to their mother, the fight, ultimate reconciliation as effected by Narada, reunion and the fire-ordeal. Sita's speech on the occasion is the eternal voice of chastity which has been held high in any part of civilised society. The work ends with a postscript in Canto eight which is the poet's own words about the composition of the work and is not strictly relevant to the theme of Sita's ordeal.

The Jaina tradition recognises no incarnation of god-head since this tradition identifies no godhead as such. But the way Rama has been portrayed through Acarya Tulasi's pen, he has been just and fair to him, much more fair than Bhavabhuti on the one hand, and westerners like T. H. Griffith on the other. What Rama did was a harsh duty as a king, though in doing so, as a husband and human being, he exposed himself to the greatest anguish and repentence for his own self. In the poet's words :

But Raghava's heart was filled with upheaval great
The heaven was rolling above and the earth was
rolling below. (p. 47)

This is just human. Rama's visit to the place where Sita was discarded at his command and the impact it had on his heart are described more vividly in this work than anywhere else. He fells down in a swoon ; his mind is wholly unsettled ; he is in utter despair. Unable to bear the pang of separation says Rama :

Bring her soon here, Sita is truly chaste
Whatever the people may say, I won't listen to any one. (p. 155)

But if Rama is human, Sita is real divinity, the ideal of Indian womanhood. Her whole life is one of suffering, dedication and sacrifice which rarely has a parallel. Brought up in a royal household and married to a prince, she is marked by destiny for a different kind of living ; for, she has a mission to fulfil. She voluntarily courts the hazardous life in the forest in the company of her husband ; she is forcibly carried away by the demon king and confined in a palace garden at a place which is separated from the mainland of India ; she is recovered at a gap of six months but these six months are of severest torture and temptation for her, in which her preference courted the former ; and at the moment she is about to be happy, she is discarded by her dear husband for a public scandal which she knew as much as he to be baseless. Such is her life and such life is deserving of the highest adoration which the Acarya has rightly bestowed on her. Here are a few lines from the work :

> Praise be to Sita's chastity great. (p.1)
> ... ...
> Mountain may stumble, but not Sita
> from her determination
> Every particle of dust at Lanka may be asked
> about her good deeds. (p. 51)

Such lines can be quoted in abundance ; for the Acarya is full of high praise and esteem for Sita. And that is but just. What is more, in this high esteem for Sita is mixed up the Acarya's esteem and adoration for the entire woman-hood which he feels has received less than justice in society dominated as it is by men. Here is a part of his outburst for the cause of woman :

> Full of insult is the life of woman
> Full of torture is the life of woman
> Full of fear is the life of woman
> Full of sacrifice is the life of woman.

> The very existence of woman is in the hands of man
> The very personality of woman is in the hands of man
> The very own-ness of woman is in the hands of man
> All that is woman is in the hands of man. (p. 72)

Then turning to man :

The woman has no place in the society of man
The woman has no respect in the society of man

... ...

Hark, ye man! thy torture won't last ;
Hark, ye man! no more ye be able to carry thy sinful acts
Hark ye man! no more be tolerated thy misbehaviour
Hark ye man! no more will deceive thy lip-deep love. (pp. 72-73)

And to woman :

Woman! Don't ye have any awakening ?
Woman! Don't ye have any feeling ?
Woman! Don't ye have any honour ?
Is there no trace of life in thy thinking ? (p. 73)

Who else can write words like these but one charged with the democratic ideal of equality between men and women. Fortunately during the past one hundred years the cause of female emancipation has progressed much, though there is much leeway still to be made up. But think of the age in which Sita lived—several millennia prior to the present age ! The poet heralds a new age in the following words :

Woman! ye have to rise on thy own strength
Ye have to discard artificial cover
Ye cannot afford to run away by losing balance
Ye have to hurl the novel weapon of revolt for Truth. (p. 74)

And this he does because Indian womanhood which held so high a place throughout history cannot be lowered in any way. For, if the prestige of women is lowered or lost, what else remains ? So says the poet :

Indian woman has remained illustrious
throughout history
It was her chastity alone that flashed
the entire edifice. (p. 177)

Noble words indeed! The Rama-story apart, even as a piece of poetry, *Agni-parīkṣā's* claim to rank as a classic is very high.

Postscript

Even such a noble work recently became a victim of political victimisation by the Government of the Madhya Pradesh.[2] Objection has been particularly raised against lines at pp. 29, 33, 38-39, 43-44, all in Canto three entitled 'Conspiracy' and page 86 which contains a part of Sita's lamentation. Adequate English rendering of some of these portions has been given above. Any sane reader would see and opine that these words do not contain the poet's estimate of Sita but only the conspirator's opinion about her and the subsequent public gossip, because of which there was the separation, followed by the fire-ordeal. The work was published in 1961 and it is somewhat surprising that it became a victim of fanatical agitation and political action ten years later when the work was almost a forgotten thing. If during these long years the Sanatanist orthodoxy could survive, despite the work, it would have remained equally unscathed even in future. But this was not going to be and the Sanatanist orthodoxy suddenly woke up. Interestingly enough, some foolish acts even bear useful fruits, as this act of the M.P. Government has now done, and many, like the writer of this article, who had never read this work by the Acarya or even aware of its existence before the ban, would now carefully go through it. This indeed is good but the way in which it has been brought into the public lime-light has been extremely painful, and the writer would hazard a guess if not, behind this Sanatanist uproar there is the hidden hand of some of the leading lights of the Jaina order who had never viewed the Acarya's reformist mission with sympathy and who may have provided the necessary fuel to ignite the fire. It is indeed a debatable issue whether, as per Indian spiritual tradition, the monks should indulge in a reform programme or concentrate exclusively on personal liberation about which the present writer has some strong views ; but the way in which the Acarya and the monks and nuns of his order were harassed and exposed to personal risk was sheer cowardice which deserves only unqualified condemnation.

The venue of the incident was Raipur where the Acarya and his monks and nuns were passing a monsoon sojourn. As the events unfolded, the Acarya was induced to give a sermon on his version of the Rama-story which he did in good faith on August 16, 1970. This gave the cue to the fanatics to start the carnage and give it a communal colour-

[2] Since the above lines were written, the Government of Madhya Pradesh has withdrawn the ban under the verdict of the Hon'ble High Court of Jabbalpur.—*Editor*

ing which placed the whole town to the mercy of the hooligans and ultimately led to the ban on the book. Unfortunately the action of the hooligans was not condemned in time either by top spiritual or political leadership and the Acarya was virtually left alone to issue clarifications which he did on August 22, September 6 and September 19. He was later forced to leave Raipur a few days before the *cāturmāsya* ended. But before this, on October 9, he was prevailed upon to give a sermon in a public meeting of leading citizens arranged by the Collector of Raipur, a part of which is reproduced below.

"In all the communities in India, Rama and Sita are held in equal esteem and devotion. They have been viewed as gods in the Sanatana dharma ; I too view on them as gods of Jainism. Even the Buddhists view them as gods of their own religion. To me they are gods of humanness. The Jainas view on Rama as Bhagawan. The place of Rama is the same as that of Bhagawan Parsva and Mahavira. Mahasati Sita I consider to be worthy of morning remembrance, worthy of worship and devotion. She is ideal for the entire womanhood, To utter any disrespectful word about her is to show dishonour to self, to indulge in irreverence to self, to be disrespectful of one's own religion."

The Life and Stories of the Jaina Saviour Parsvanatha

DIGEST

(based on Bhavadeva Suri's Parsvanatha Carita)

MAURICE BLOOMFIELD

Baltimore : 1919

Sarga 1 : The brothers Kamatha and Marubhuti

In those days there was a city called Potana. There ruled magnificently king Aravinda with his queen Dharini, endowed with every womanly virtue. He had a wise Purohita, Visvabhuti, whose virtuous wife Anuddhara bore him two sons, Kamatha and Marubhuti. Kamatha's wife was Varuna ; Marubhuti's Vasumdhara. They passed their lives in the pleasures of the senses. Visvabhuti in time, made over the care of his house to his sons, lived in fast under direction of a holy teacher, pondered with his whole soul the *mantra* of the *Pañcaparameṣṭhinamaskāra*, and abondoning his body, was reborn as a god in the Saudharma heaven. Also his bereaved wife Anuddhara, desolated over the loss of her husband, thinking that for her there was no further happiness practised profound penance and died.

Kamatha and Marubhuti performed in sorrow the funeral rites for their parents. Then the great sage Hariscandra, compassionate and generous, arrived in a park outside the city. The citizens, singing songs of praise, swarmed about him like bees, attracted by the fragrance of his virtues. The two brothers also went there anxious to dispel their grief for the loss of their parents through the consolations of religion.

Through the influence of sage Hariscandra, many people were converted, among others Marubhuti, who was weaned from passion, devoted himself to the law, and practised many virtues. Kamatha, whose heart was not pierced by the sage's instruction, remained unenlightened. Owing to Marubhuti's chastity his wife Vasumdhara became love-mad, and, after first repelling Kamatha's advances, finally submitted to his unbridled lust. Blinded by love they constantly indulged in incestuous adultery. Varuna, Kamatha's wife, observing, reported the affair to Marubhuti. There upon he went to a distant village but returned in the guise of a holy begger (*kārpaṭika*), and asked Kamatha for shelter. The latter assigned to him a corner of his house, where

pretending to sleep he became witness to the misconduct of his brother with his own wife. He reported the affair to the king, Aravinda, just but stern monarch, who had Kamatha forcibly mounted upon an ass, marked with many insignia of shame, and expelled from the city.

Kamatha, disgraced, deprived of wealth and relatives, roaming solitary in the forest, brooded revenge against his brother. He decided to bide his time, consumed by wrath, yet unable to retaliate, he happened upon a hermitage in the forest, took sacred vows (*dīkṣā*) and practised asceticism on a mountain. In the mean time, Marubhuti became despondent on account of the dire retribution he had brought upon his brother. Even though restrained by the king, he went to the forest to conciliate Kamatha. He threw himself upon his knees and begged forgiveness, but Kamatha took up a stone and with a single blow smashed his brother's head, and at the same time his own ascetic vow. While in pain from that mortal hurt Marubhuti harbored distressed thoughts (*ārta dhyāna*) ; he was, therefore, reborn as a wild elephant, leader of a herd in the Vindhya mountains. His sister-in-law Varuna also blinded by anger, was born as a she-elephant, and became his mate. Wildly they roamed together in the forest.

King Aravinda, living at the pinnacle of worldly pleasures, one day contemplated a great storm. The breaking of the clouds reminded him of the perishableness of all things in *samsāra*. Disgusted with his own excessive indulgences, he decided to abandon the world and its pleasures. His wives begged him not to abandon them, nor to expose the kingdom to danger. Nevertheless he took the vow in the presence of a teacher and wandered about solitarily through towns and villages. During these roamings he met a merchant, Sagaradatta, who asked him where he was going. He replied that he was going to Mount Kailasa to honour the gods. Sagaradatta asked whether there was any profit in honouring these hand-made gods. Aravinda replied that his gods were twentyfour *Arhats*, Rsabha, etc., who had surmounted passion, were omniscient, were honoured by Sakra. By the teaching of the law, they had become the saviours of every being. These *Arhats* must be worshipped and alms must be given without doubt or question.

In consequence of the instruction of the royal sage Aravinda, Sagaradatta became a Jaina lay disciple (*śrāvaka*). Going on his way, Sagaradatta arrived at the place where the elephant king Marubhuti, was in the habit of disporting himself with his females. Sagaradatta camped on the banks of a beautiful lake. The elephant Marubhuti came there to drink and proceeded to attack Sagaradatta's caravan,

slaying and dispersing. Aravinda knew through his profound insight (*abadhi*) that the time to enlighten the elephant had now come. He placed himself in *kāyotsarga* position ; the elephant came to his side and revered him. Aravinda reminded him of his former state of Marubhuti, and exhorted him to abandon his mad folly. Marubhuti then remembered his former birth as a *śrāvaka*, paid his respects to the sage and signified with his trunk that his faith was restored. Varuna, his mate, as well as many people, including Sagaradatta, accepted the faith. Then Aravinda retired to the mountain Kailasa ; the elephant Marubhuti lived piously on sun-warmed water and dry leaves, repenting that he had inflicted destruction and terror upon living beings.

In the meantime Kamatha, unchastened even by the murder of Marubhuti, ignored by his teacher, despised by other ascetics, had died in a troubled state of mind (*ārta-dhyāna*), and was reborn as a Kurkuta serpent. Killing and endangering all living beings, he infested the forest, and finally bit the elephant Marubhuti. The latter died in the thought of the law (*dharma-dhyāna*), therefore was reborn as a god in the Sahasrara heaven, where he was acclaimed by celestial females. Varuna also was reborn in heaven as Marubhuti's wife ; they lived there in the highest enjoyment of the pleasures of the senses. The Kurkuta serpent (Kamatha) was reborn as a hell-inhabitant in the Pancamavani hell suffering all the tortures of that hell.

Sarga 2 : King Kiranavega

On the Vaitadhya mountain stood a sumptuous city, Tilaka, in which ruled a Vidyadhara king, Vidyutgati, with his beloved wife Tilakavati. The soul of the elephant (Marubhuti) fell from the eighth *kalpa* into the womb of Tilakavati, to be born as prince Kiranavega. In due time that prince was married to Padmavati, daughter of an important vassal of the king. The king, after giving instructions to his ministers and preaching royal wisdom to his son, made over to him his kingdom, and took vows with the celebrated Guru Sagara. Kiranavega had a son, Kiranatejasa, who grew up finely. A sage, Suraguru by name, arrived at a park outside the city, and delivered a sermon culminating in the five-fold vows (*pañca-vrata*) being the duties in lighter form (*aṇu*) of the house-holder (*gṛhi*) in distinction from the ascetic (*yati*).

Many people were converted. King Kiranavega turned from concerns of the body to concerns of the soul and became as one who has attained salvation while yet alive (*jivanmukta*). He then thanked

the sage, resorted to his protection and made over his kingdom to his son Kiranatejasa. With the permission of his Guru he went to Puskaradvipa and passed some time on the mountain Vaitadhya in austere penance, carrying an image of the *Jina*. The soul of the Kurkuta serpent came from hell, being reborn there as a great serpent. Owing to their prenatal enmity the serpent bit Kiranavega. The later regarded this as the result of his *karma*, died contentedly and forgivingly and was reborn as a god in Jambudrumavarta. The serpent was burnt by a forest fire and went to Dhumaprabha hell.

Sarga 3 : King Vajranabha and his infidel cousin Kuvera

Kiranavega fell in due time from his high estate of god, and was reborn as prince Vajranabha, son of Laksmivati, the wife of Vajravirya, king of Subhankara. He grew into every bodily and mental perfection, so as to become the fitting mate of Vijaya, daughter of Chandraketu of Badgadesa, with whom he lived wisely and piously. It happened that he had a visit from a cousin (*mātulanandana*), by name of Kuvera, an infidel, hated even by his father. Kuvera mocked Vajranabha's piety, advising him to fulfil every desire of his mind, speech, and body. While Vajranabha was trying to reform Kuvera, the great sage Lokacandra arrived in a park outside the city. They both went to hear him preach a lengthy sermon on a variety of topics. Kuvera remained sceptical, upheld the advantages of a sensual life, and supported his position by rationalistic arguments. The sage gently reproved and refuted him and in the course of exposition of the Jaina doctrine, arrived at the four worldly (*laukika*) virtues, which are : *vinaya* 'tact', *viveka* 'discernment', *susaṅga* 'association with good people' and *susattvatā* 'resolute courage'.

The infidel Kuvera was converted by the sage's elaborate exposition of the four 'worldly virtues'. Kuvera, further more, inquired after those virtues which reach beyond the world (*lokottara*). Lokacandra explained that the same worldly virtues, applied to the highest aims constitute the virtues that reach beyond life (*lokottarā guṇāh*). At the end of sage's sermon, Kuvera asked him to be his *guru*.

Prince Vajranabha, in the company of Kuvera, returned to the city. His father, king Vajravirya, made over to him his kingdom, and took the vow. Vajranabha, while ruling piously and righteously, was taken in his turn, with misgivings as to the stability of the world and its allurement. He also decided to seek salvation. Notwithstanding the protest of his son Cakrayudha, he appointed him his successor,

and turned mendicant. He wandered to Sukacchavijaya. There the soul of the serpent had been reborn as a wild Bhilla by name of Kurangaka who infested the mountain of Jvalana. Vajranabha went there and placed himself in *kāyotsarga* posture, fearless in the midst of the howls of elephants, jackals, *rākṣasas* and so on. Kurangaka, out of prenatal hatred hit Vajranabha with an arrow. Vajranabha, though struck fatally, remained free from evil thought remarking that he had been killed by the soul of the Bhilla in a former birth. He was reborn as the god Lalitanga. Kurangaka, when he died, went to the Saptamavani hell.

Sarga 4 : Story of the Emperor Suvarnabhanu

King Vajrabhanu of Surapura had a lovely and virtuous wife, named Sudarsana. The soul of Vajranabha, in due time, fell from heaven, and entered the womb of Sudarsana. The queen had the 'fourteen great dreams', which herald the birth of a *Cakravartin* (Emperor). In due course she gave birth to a boy whom the king named Suvarnabhanu. He grew up so accomplished as to permit the king, who had become averse to the world, to take the vow, and to leave his kingdom in charge of his son. One day Suvarnabhanu mounted on an inversely trained horse, which galloped off when checked by the rein. The horse did not stop until they came to a lake. After bathing in its clear water, the king saw in front of him an ascetic's grove full of antelopes. His right eye twitched, which encouraged him to enter the grove in joyous anticipation. There he saw a maiden, surrounded by companions, engaged in sprinkling creepers. The king thought her more beautiful than Rambha ; she seemed the quintessence of the charm of Nagas, Vidyadharas, and immortal women. While engaged in this thought, the maiden and a companion entered a bower of fllowers. There she began to sprinkle a Bakula tree with her mouth, to the delight of its blossoms. Ravished by her charms, the king reflected that she could not be an ordinary hermitage's servitor, but must be of royal descent. Now a bee flew into the face of the maiden. She asked her companion to protect her, but received the reply, that this was king Suvarnabhanu's business. Then the king showed himself, and asked who dared to injure her, while the son of Vajrabhanu was protector of the earth. The maidens remained silent. When the king again asked whether anything was disturbing their pious practices, the friend found courage to say, that during Suvarnabhanu's rulership no one could do so ; that a bee merely had disturbed her friend. Then she asked him who he was. Unwilling to declare himself, he pretended to belong to the king's retinue, commissioned by the king to protect the hermitage from intrusion. But the maid knew him to be the king himself.

The king then asked who her mistress was. With a sigh she replied that her name was Padma, the daughter of Ratnavali, the wife of the Vidyadhara king of Ratnapura. At his death his sons had quarreled, the kingdom had been distracted, therefore Ratnavali had taken her young daughter to that hermitage, whose abbot was Ratnavali's brother Galava. A soothsayer had professed that Padma would be the wife of the *Cakravartin* Suvarnabhanu, carried there by a run-away horse. The king, recognising the hand of destiny, asked to see the sage. The maiden (whose name turned out to be Nanda) told him that the sage had gone to pay his respects to another Muni, but would return on that day. Then an old nun told Nanda to go with Padma to greet the sage. Nanda reported to the sage the king's arrival, where upon he extoled the prophet who had predicted it. Together with the ladies he went to do honour to the king, who received him with distinction. The sage told him of the prophecy, and the pair were wedded by the *gāndharva* rite of marriage.

Padma's step-brother, Padmottara, a Vidyadhara king arrived, paid his respects to Suvarnabhanu, and bade him follow him to the mountain of Vaitadhya, there to resume lordship over the Vidyadharas. The king consented. With Padma he mounted the heaven-going chariot of the Vidyadhara. Padma mourned her separation from her mother, the hermitage maidens, the gazelles, and the flowers she had been tending. Pointing out her glorious destiny, Ratnavali consoled her, bidding her live as an exemplar of wifely devotion. They arrived at the mountain of Vaitadhya, where Suvarnabhanu was consecrated king of Vidyadharas. After staying there for some time he returned to his own city. He acquired the fourteen great jewels, celebrated the great festival (*mahotsava*) of eighteen days, and despatched the wheel of sovereignty from his armory into the easternly direction. He cast an arrow which fell down before the king of Magadha, as he was sitting in his assembly hall. The king angrilly took it up, but, when he read on it the name of Suvarnabhanu, he went with presents in his hands to conciliate him. Suvarnabhanu also conquered successfully Varadama, and Prabhasa, respectively the gods of the southern and western directions ; Sindhu, the divinity of Vaitadhya and other kings and divinities, so as to control the whole earth. Kings and gods then consecrated him emperor by the great consecration (*mahābhiṣeka*) which lasted twelve years, being performed with water from holy bathing places (*tīrthas*). He acquired sixtyfour thousand wives, thirtytwo thousand kings became his vassals. He had countless elephants, chariots, cities and villages. Thus he ruled long in all the glamour of a *Cakravartin*.

One day, as he was sitting upon the roof of his palace, he heard of the arrival of Jagannatha, the *Tīrthankara* (Saviour). Removing his imperial insignia, he humbly went to greet him. After receiving instruction from him, he became enlightened and decided to devote himself to salvation. He took the vow with Jagannatha, became an accomplished disciple (*Gītārtha*) and continued to perfect himself still further. Once, when he stood with a *Jina* image in forest Khiragiri, he was attacked by a lion, inhabited by the soul of the Bhilla Kurangaka, who had been re-incarnated in the lion's body after leaving hell. He died forgivingly was reborn as a god in the Mahaprabha Vimana heaven, but the lion, at his own death, went to the fourth hell.

Sarga 5 : Early Life of the Arhat Parsvanatha

The soul of the lion, after passing through the wretched animal existences, was reincarnated as Katha, the son of Brahmin, named Rora. Both his parents died as soon as he was born so that he had to be brought up by charity. As a grown man, he also carried on a miserable existence, wandering from house to house, shy and given to fear. One day observing some rich men, resplendent in their finery, he became disgusted with life. Concluding that the rich owed their opulence to their penances in some previous existence, he decided to follow their example, turned ascetic, and subsisted on the roots of plants.

The soul of Suvarnabhanu, on the other hand, was reincarnated in the womb of Vamadevi, queen of the mighty Iksvaku king Asvasena of Varanasi. The soul descended on the fourth day of the dark half of the month of Caitra, under the constellation Visakha. Fourteen great dreams of the queen, announced to her the arrival of a glorious and virtuous son. At the end of an undisturbed period of pregnancy, the queen, delivered a son on the tenth of the black half of the month Pausa, under the constellation Visakha. All Nature rejoiced at the event. Indra came from heaven, garlanded and bathed the child. Queen Vama rejoiced in her son. The king, apprised of the happy event, had prisoners released in his honour. The people were jubilant. When the time for name-giving had come, the queen remembered that she had seen in a troubled night a serpent moving by her side (*pārśvatah*). This she had told the king, who interpreted the serpent as the power of the boy ; therefore he named him Parsva.

He grew up with every youthful bodily perfection, because he possessed the twentytwo auspicious characteristics, so that all the accomplishments came to him of themselves. On certain occasion a man,



Parsva's Ordeal

—*Ganesh Lalwani*

admitted to the audience hall of the king, reported that in Kusasthala, there had ruled a king Naravarmana who had taken the vow at the end of a glorious career, after having made over his kingdom to his son Prasenajita. The latter had an altogether perfect daughter, Prabhavati. She had once heard in the park a song in praise of Parsva's perfection, since then had been beside herself with longing for him. Prabhavati's parents had understood and approved of her feelings. Prasenajita, with a view to Parsva, had decided to institute a *svayamvara.* But Yavana, king of Kalinga, had been angered at the thought that Prabhavati should be given in marriage to anyone but himself. He had therefore beleaguered Kusasthala with a great host. The speaker himself, Purusottama, father of the minister Sagaradatta had been sent by Prasenajita to report these events to Asvasena, so that the latter might act accordingly.

On the strength of this report, Asvasena, being wroth, made preparations to go to the assistance of Prasenajita in Kusasthala. When Parsva heard of this, he promptly came out of his play-room, acknowledged his father's ability to prevail in war ; but offered instead to gain the end in view by instructing Yavana. His father consented. Parsva started with Purusottama and a great equipment. On arriving in Kusasthala, Parsva dwelt in a seven-storied palace, erected for him by the gods in the middle of the park. He sent an ambassador to announce to Yavana his peaceful mission, advising him to abandon the siege. But Yavana refused angrily ; would not hear of either Parsva or Asvasena ; and threatened the ambassador with death at the hand of his soldiers. An old minister of his, however, warned them not to destroy the kingdom by attacking the ambassador of the holy Lord Parsva. After they had desisted, he soothed the ambassador's wounded feelings by promising to do honour to Parsva. The minister then urged Yavana to conciliate Parsva. He pointed out, more over, that Indra's car with Matali as charioteer was at Parsva's disposal. Yavana saw the folly of his ways, tied an axe to his throat, went submissively to the audience hall of Parsva and was received and dismissed forgivingly. When Prasenajita heard this, he brought Prabhavati to be his happy bride. Parsva said that he had come to act as his protector, and not to marry a maiden. Whereat Prabhavati was sorely grieved. Prasenajita proposed to join him in his return to Varanasi and to interview his father. To this Parsva consented.

Sarga 6 : Marriage and later life of the Arhat Parsvanatha

King Asvasena rejoiced at the sight of Parsva and Prabhavati, greeted Prasenajita and inquired after his mission. Prasenajita, pointing

out Prabhavati's love, asked that she be chosen as Parsva's wife. Asvasena replied that he shared his wish, but that Parsva had grown averse to life and royal glory, and longed for *nirvāṇa*, so that he did not know what Parsva might do. They both went to Parsva, and stated their desire. Parsva answered that eternal, and not perishable possesions were his desire ; that, therefore, he wished to uproot the tree of existence. Asvasena agreed but asked that he should first fulful his father's heart's desire, by founding a family. Parsva consenting, festive preparations were made. The marriage took place.

Once, when the Lord was standing at a window of his palace, he noticed a great concourse of people. On inquiry, he found that they had come to do honour to the ascetic Katha. Out of curiosity the Lord also went to see, and found Katha performing the severe five-fire penance (*pañcāgni tapah*). And he saw that Katha had thrown a great serpent into a fire-pen, which stood upon the fagots of his fire. He asked the reason for this pitiless practice, inconsistent with Katha's own austerities. Katha replied that kings understood only elephants and horses ; that religion was understood by sages alone. Parsva ordered the fire put out. The agonised serpent came out. It died after uttering *namaskāra mantra* and was reborn as Dharana, the wealthy king of Nagas. Katha, on the other hand, as the result of his false practices, was reborn as an Asura, by name Meghamalin.

One day in spring Parsva entered a palace in his park and saw there, painted on a wall, the picture of Nemi, the *Arhat*, engaged in ascetic practice. Reflecting that Nemi had taken the vow in early life, he decided that himself also would abandon the *samsāra*. The Sarasvatas and other divinities decended from heaven and encouraged him to save the world. After informing his parents of his decision, he began to distribute alms, preparatory to his consecration. The Vasavas from heaven, and princes of the earth prepared his consecration. He mounted a wonderful palanquin, and, to the songs and music of bards, acclaimed by the people of the city, went to a hermitage to enjoy the glorious renunciation. At the foot of an Asoka tree, he renounced power and wealth, plucked out his hair, and at the age of thirty, obtained the knowledge due to mental perfection. Indra gathered five fistfuls of his plucked hair in his own robe, and threw them into the milk ocean. Three hundred princess took the vow with him.

On the next day he went to a place called Kopakata, to obtain food in the house of a householder named Dhanya. Next he wandered, until he came into the forest of Kadambari, at the foot of the Kaligiri

mountain, and remained on the shore of lake Kunda. An elephant named Mahindhara, coming here to drink, remembered the events of his former life in which he had been a house-holder named Hemala. Desiring now, though an animal, to do honour to the Lord, he went into the lake and plucked lotuses which he placed at his feet. The gods arrived, worshipped the Lord with fragrant substances. The hermits of that region spoke of this occurance to king Karakandu in Campa, who whereupon came to greet the Lord. The gods set up an image of the Lord which the king adored ; he built for it an extensive *caitya*. The lake Kunda became a purifying *tirtha*, assuming the name Kalikunda, because the mountain Kali was in its vicinity. Parsvanatha then went to Sivapuri and placed himself in *kāyotsarga* posture in the forest of Kausamba. The serpent king Dharana, remembering his former kindness, arrived there in great state to do him honour. During three days he held an umbrella over the Lord's head to protect him from the sun. From that time on the city there was called Ahicchatra (lit., serpent's umbrella). He then went to Rajapura, where king Isvara came to do him honour. Isvara had a *caitya* built on the spot where the saint had been in *kāyotsarga* posture. In it he placed an image of the saint. The caitya then obtained the name Kukkutesvara, the city there being called Kukkutesvara. The Lord then wandered again. The Asura Meghamalin, prompted by his prenatal hostility, attacked Parsva with tigers, elephants and scorpions, but when the Lord showed no fright, they slunk off, as though ashamed. Then the Asura tried to submerge him in the waters produced by a fearful thunderstorm, but the Lord did not budge from his place and from his meditations. The serpent king Dharana found out, by *avadhi* insight, that Katha was attacking the Lord, went there with his divine wives, and placed lotuses at the feet of the Lord. By means of his seven hoods he fashioned an umbrella over his head ; the Lord stood there like a royal *hansa* bird, submerged in a deep trance. The wives of Dharana honoured him with songs and the music of instruments. But the Lord retained his equanimity in the face of both Dharana's devotion and Kamatha's attacks. Dharana then excoriated Meghamalin's hatred of the Lord, pointing out that he had done him no injury, but on the contrary, had saved him from the sin of burning him (Dharana) on the occasion of his unholy practice. Meghamalin then repented, resorted to the law and went home, determined to devote himself to piety.

Thereupon Parsva went to his native city of Kasi where he reached the state of *kevalin*. The thrones of the gods shook, they acclaimed him. Asvasena, his wife Vama and Parsva's wife, Prabhavati, went out to do him honour. Parsva then preached on the banks of the Ganga

and Yamuna, pointing his sermon towards the four-fold *dharma* consisting of charity (*dāna*), virtue (*śīla*), asceticism (*tapah*) and character (*bhāva*). Turning to the definition of charity, he established three kinds : giving of knowledge (*jñānadāna*), bestowing security from fear or danger (*abhayadana*), and furnishing support to religion (*dharmopastambhadāna*).

Having concluded his exposition of the three-fold *dāna* Parsva turned to the second branch of the *dharma* namely *śīla* or virtue which he subdivided and classified, especially with regard to its application to ascetics (*yati*) on the one hand (ten *vratas*) and to householders (*gṛhīn*) on the other (twelve *vratas*). He then turned to that virtue which even the gods found difficult to observe, namely *brahmarupa* or avoidance of illicit attachment to those who belong to others.

At the end of the sermon on the fourfold *dharma* many were converted, or even reached perfection. Among them was Parsva's father king Asvasena, who took the vow, after having made over his kingdom to his son Hastisena. Then also Vamadevi (his mother) and Prabhavati (his wife), took the vow. Ten distinguished men Aryadatta and others, took the vow, and became heads of assembles (Ganabhrt)

Sarga 7 : Life of Parsvanatha continued

Then the Lord, followed by the assembly (*samgha*) went elsewhere, the wheel of the Law upon a throne going infront, a drum sounding in the air. He went on his journey upon golden lotuses, and, as he went, trees bent, thorns turned down ; the seasons, the sense objects (sound, smells, etc.,) the wind and the birds were propitious. By the might of his Lordship diseases fled to a distance of 100 *yojanas* ; and where he dwelt, from their vanished hostility and other afflictions. Superior to every one, the lotus of his feet ever attended by scores of gods, the Lord traversed the earth.

Sarga 8 : Life of Parsvanatha concluded. His nirvāṇa

Lord Parsva, knowing that *nirvāṇa* was at hand, went to the Sammeta mountain. In the company of thirtythree *munis* he practised a month's asceticism. He attained the various forms of spiritual refinement, to the point when his *karma* was destroyed (*kṣīṇakarma*), passed away, and reached the summit of heaven. Sakra bathed the body in the fluid of the ocean of milk, and adroned it with divine ornaments. The gods placed his body upon a pyre of sandal and aloe wood, and threw fragrant substances upon it. Cloud youths (Meghakumaras) quenched the pyre. Over the bones of the Lord the gods erected a jeweled *stūpa*, and they dispersed to their several houses.

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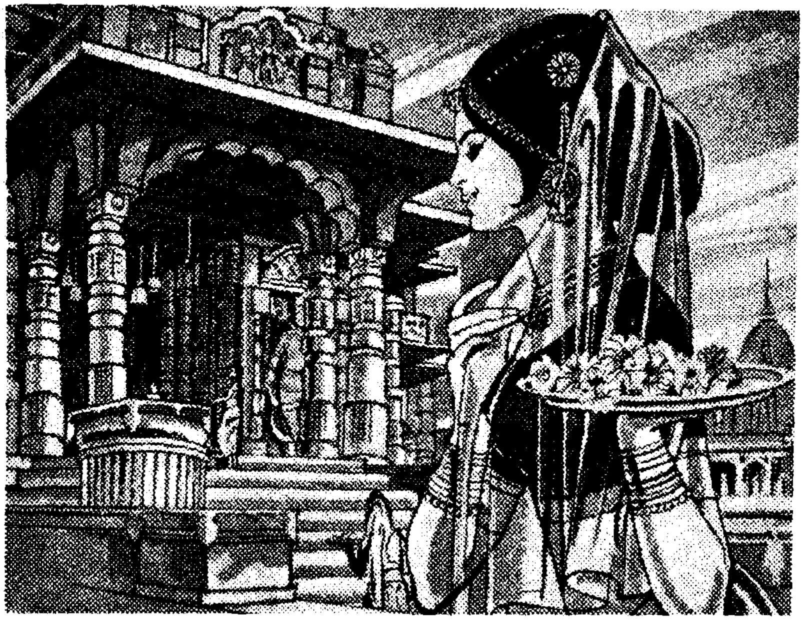
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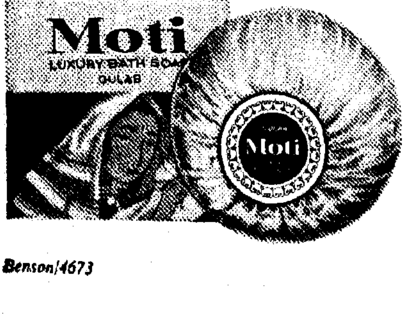
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Winter 1971

